

From: sherry@angel-havens.com [angels-

Sent: Friday, December 12, 2003 5:52 PM

To: adoptionregs@state.gov

My name is Sherry Archer and I am the Executive Director of Angels' Haven Outreach, a licensed, non-profit international adoption agency. I am sending this message on behalf of the agency, as well as the clients we serve (the children who cannot speak up for themselves).

While we all abhor even the thought of child trafficking, after reviewing all 121 pages of the proposed regulations of the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, I fear they will do more harm than good. It appears that there is a real attempt to eliminate the smaller agencies who collectively place thousands of children and will leave only a handful of very large agencies to provide services. Not only will less children be served, but there is a greater likelihood for corruption to take place. It will also mean higher fees for the perspective adoptive parents.

Who will monitor the accreditation entity? Corruption has already shown its ugly head in that some agencies have already paid as much as \$100,000.00 to become accredited, when the accreditation entity hasn't even officially been designated.

It seems to me that since the agencies are already licensed, and monitored at the State level, that a simple and inexpensive option would be that the agencies pay a littler higher annual fee to the State and let each State continue to monitor it's licensed agencies.

We already have basic federal guidelines required for an international home study, which is monitored by the INS (BCIS). I don't understand how these accreditation regulations are going to help stop child trafficking.

The real risk of child trafficking comes in when large amounts of money come into play. So the obvious answer is to eliminate "big business" not create it.

I am also an adoptive mother who utilized a large adoption agency who charged too much, and offered poor service. This was 25 years ago when there were very few agencies to choose from, so I had no choice.

Angels' Haven may only place 40 or 50 children each year, but it makes a huge difference to those children and their families.

Thank you for listening,

Sherry Archer  
Executive Director

12/15/2003